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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2149 (2014), by which the Council established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and requested me to report to the Council on 1 August. The report provides an update on the situation in the Central African Republic since my last report, of 3 March (S/2014/142), and the implementation of the Mission's mandate. It also provides an update on preparations for the transfer of authority from the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) to MINUSCA on 15 September and the mission concept, including a concept of operations and benchmarks for the sequencing of the mandate, and on an exit strategy.

II. Major developments

A. Security, human rights and humanitarian developments

2. While the situation in some areas of Bangui has improved, the overall security situation in the Central African Republic remains highly volatile. Civilians are targets of sectarian violence and reprisal killings in the capital and in other parts of the country every day. Serious and unabated violations of human rights and international humanitarian law are committed in a climate of total impunity, including forced displacement of the civilian population, particularly Muslims; the destruction of property; rape and other forms of sexual violence; the recruitment of children by armed groups; and violations of the right to life and freedom of movement, and to security and physical integrity, through assassinations, summary executions, and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

3. The large majority of the country's Muslim population has been displaced or has left the country, while some 20,000 of them are trapped in nine locations in the western and central parts of the country, aware that if they leave their sites they may be attacked before they reach safety. In Boda alone, some 5,670 people are under threat in an enclave that is subjected to anti-balaka attacks. These communities are being denied access to food and basic commodities by anti-balaka. In Yaloke, over

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600 Peuhl Mbororo breeders who lost their cattle remained trapped in the town as a result of attacks by anti-balaka. They have requested the support of the international community to be relocated to Cameroon, where some 50 of them have already taken refuge along with family members.

4. In Bangui, although the security situation has improved, the remaining Muslim communities continue to be largely confined to their neighbourhoods, mainly in PK5. They are encircled by anti-balaka elements who regularly attack these enclaves with firearms and grenades and are cutting off food and medical supplies. There were also reports of anti-balaka targeting non-Muslim individuals believed to provide supplies or services to these areas. Elements of the Central African Armed Forces are involved in many of these incidents as part of the anti-balaka.

5. Increasing violence and brutality against Muslim communities in Bangui contributed to the formation of Muslim youth self-defence groups to protect their communities. They have engaged in violent and radical action targeting the anti-balaka and their positions as well as non-Muslim communities. They reportedly enjoy the support of some elements of the ex-Séléka hiding among the local Muslim population. Some 2,200 ex-Séléka elements remain in Bangui regrouped in three sites under MISCA protection. A census is under way to register these elements as part of a project to relocate them to their community of origin. At least two of them were killed when leaving the sites to buy food.

6. A number of violent clashes involved the international forces in Bangui and elsewhere in the country. On 29 March, a senior Chadian army officer appointed to MISCA was proceeding in a column to Bangui. When the column reached the outskirts of Bangui, an exchange of fire ensued in PK12, during which at least 28 people were killed and many more wounded. Following allegations that Chadian elements of MISCA opened fire on the population without provocation, the Government of Chad announced, on 3 April, that it would withdraw its infantry battalion of 850 troops from MISCA.

7. As a measure of last resort, humanitarian actors facilitated the relocation of 1,352 internally displaced persons, mostly Muslims, from Bangui to Bambari on 20 April and to Kabo and Moyen Sido in the northern part of the country on 28 April, with the support of the international forces. On 28 April, a convoy was attacked on the Dekoa-Kaga Bandoro axis by anti-balaka; the attack included the use of grenades. Two people were killed and six injured before they arrived at their destination the next day.

8. The attack at the Church of Notre Dame de Fatima in Bangui on 28 May illustrated the vicious cycle of attacks and reprisals with a radicalization of elements of both the ex-Séléka and anti-balaka and the potential for escalation. Eleven people were killed, including the priest, and 24 were wounded; three later succumbed to their injuries. The attack followed the brutal killing by suspected anti-balaka elements of three Muslim youths on their way to an intercommunal reconciliation football match earlier in the week. These incidents triggered popular demonstrations against the perceived inaction to restore security by both the transitional authorities and the international forces. A number of roadblocks were erected, which had to be removed by the international forces. Bangui was paralysed for three days and dozens more people are reported to have been killed.

9. In the provinces, the security situation was marked by cycles of attacks and reprisals between armed groups and communities resulting in a high number of casualties. There was also a resurgence of attacks on villages by ex-Séléka and affiliated heavily armed groups of members of the Peuhl community along the border with Chad, including some who had reportedly crossed the border from Chad. Many villages were set ablaze, causing the displacement of the population. The increasing presence of the ex-Séléka in the western and central parts of the country prompted the anti-balaka to reinforce their positions in these areas, which led to a number of violent clashes between anti-balaka and ex-Séléka.

10. In spite of immediate efforts by MISCA to redeploy troops, the withdrawal of the Chadian MISCA troops from Bossangoa at the beginning of April prompted the remaining Muslim population regrouped in a site with MISCA protection to leave Bossangoa. On 11 April, 540 people were relocated from Bossangoa to Chad by road, escorted by departing Chadian MISCA troops.

11. On 13 May, a group of anti-balaka were ambushed in the village of Galo in the western part of the country. Twelve people were killed, including a French journalist who was travelling with the anti-balaka. The international forces subsequently discovered her body with another corpse in the trunk of a car.

12. The situation in Bambari, where ex-Séléka established their military headquarters in May, significantly deteriorated during the period under review. On 22 May, large crowds protested in Bambari against the activities of the forces of Operation Sangaris in the town, perceived by the population as forcefully disarming the ex-Séléka. Subsequent clashes resulted in three persons killed and several vehicles destroyed.

13. On 23 June, in a village outside Bambari, some 50 armed anti-balaka brutally killed at least 18 Muslims, including three children and one woman. In a reprisal attack on the same day, eight Christians were killed by ex-Séléka elements in the town itself. On 24 June, approximately a hundred armed elements affiliated with the anti-balaka arrived in Bambari from Grimari, where they were prevented by MISCA and Sangaris from entering the city. Subsequent exchanges of fire between the international forces and the anti-balaka resulted in a number of casualties among the anti-balaka. The events entailed random acts of violence against civilians and a large number of displacements. In total, over 46 people were confirmed dead and 28 wounded, while some 12,000 people sought refuge in churches, the MISCA compound and other areas in the vicinity of the Sangaris perimeter. On 7 July, the internally displaced persons site at Saint Joseph Cathedral and the Bishop's residence were attacked, resulting in at least 27 deaths, including women and children.

14. On 26 June, Central African armed forces and Sudanese forces withdrew from Birao following an ultimatum issued by an ex-Séléka group reportedly under the control of Noureddine Adam, relocating to Am-Dafok on the border with the Sudan. The Central African and Sudanese forces had been deployed to Birao as part of a joint task force established to protect the common border further to a tripartite agreement between the Governments of the Central African Republic, Chad and the Sudan in 2009. The task force was reduced to a two-part entity as a result of the departure of the Chadian forces from the Central African Republic in May.

15. On 29 June, in Bakouma in the Mbomou prefecture, the Uganda People's Defence Forces operating in the area were attacked by elements of the Lord's Resistance Army and ex-Séléka dissidents resulting in the death of one Ugandan soldier and two ex-Séléka elements. On 30 June, ex-Séléka elements clashed with Ugandan forces in Nzako, Mbomou prefecture, during which at least 15 ex-Séléka elements were killed.

16. Rampant impunity remains a major challenge throughout the country. Rule of law institutions are totally absent outside Bangui. Criminal procedure law does not allow the Court of Appeal in Bangui to handle alleged perpetrators arrested outside the Court's jurisdiction. Security concerns, insufficient protection and political pressure are preventing magistrates and lawyers from doing their work. Since my last report, no major crime cases have been investigated, prosecuted or adjudicated by the authorities and only minor offence case hearings have resumed at the Tribunal de grande instance. The penitentiary administration continues to face frequent escapes from the two prisons that are operational in Bangui as a result of the lack of trained and competent prison staff, alleged collusion of security staff with armed groups, corruption and weak physical security.

17. The situation of women and children remains of serious concern: sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls is being committed by all groups in the context of sectarian violence. The crimes include rape, gang rape, forced marriage, sexual slavery and sexual mutilation. The Government estimates that in 2014 around 44.5 per cent of the population suffered sexual violence. Of these, approximately 20 per cent are rape cases, 90 per cent of reported rape cases were gang rapes by armed men and 10 per cent of the gender-based violence cases were forced marriages. Children's rights continued to be violated by the parties to the conflict. There were reports of recruitment and use of child soldiers by both the ex-Séléka and anti-balaka, killing and maiming, rape, attacks against schools and hospitals, abduction and denial of humanitarian assistance.

18. Humanitarian needs remained immense in all sectors. Two and a half million people, over half of the population of the Central African Republic, are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. More than 1 million people have been displaced by the conflict and 400,000 Central Africans have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, some 270,000 from December 2013 to July. Although in Bangui the number of internally displaced persons has decreased to 105,300, owing in part to a relative improvement in the security situation, outside of the capital some 530,300 are still displaced. The percentage of the rural population facing food insecurity has almost doubled since September 2013, to some 45 per cent. To date, only 37 per cent of the humanitarian appeal has been funded.

19. MISCA and Operation Sangaris continued to respond to situations in high-risk areas and make efforts to protect civilians, while humanitarian actors addressed the critical needs of displaced persons. MISCA also increased its capacity to provide escorts to logistics and humanitarian convoys and improved tactical communication, which increased its overall capacity to conduct operations. The European Union operation (EUFOR) reached full operational capability on 15 June and provided security at the Bangui airport as well as in the third and fifth arrondissements of Bangui, which allowed MISCA and Sangaris to enhance their deployments outside of the capital. MINUSCA worked closely with these forces to coordinate the international response and enhance the protection of populations under threat.

20. Following allegations that MISCA peacekeepers were implicated in the enforced disappearance of civilians in Boali, MISCA announced on 17 July the suspension of its commander in Boali and his unit pending the completion of the investigation.

B. Political developments

21. The challenging security environment led to increasing criticism of the transitional authorities, which further accentuated the fragility of the transition. The transitional authorities struggled to govern the country without security forces and financial means. At the same time, the political elite was deeply divided and there was a high level of political and social antagonism and distrust among political actors and between communities. In the light of the growing criticism, on 6 May, the Head of State of the Transition, Catherine Samba-Panza, announced in her address to the nation marking her first hundred days in office that she would reshuffle her Government. The initiative was put on hold following consultations with national and regional partners.

22. On 27 June, the Head of State of the Transition addressed the informal meeting of Heads of State of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) on the situation in the Central African Republic, which was held on the sidelines of the African Union Summit in Malabo. In a subsequent communiqué, the ECCAS Heads of State reaffirmed their support for the Head of State of the Transition and urged the transitional authorities to work towards national reconciliation, while calling on all parties to cease all acts of violence and engage in efforts to find a political solution to the crisis. The ECCAS Heads of State also called on the United Nations, the African Union and ECCAS to urgently establish an international mediation team under the leadership of the Mediator, the President of the Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, to support the Central Africans in launching a political dialogue process.

23. The Malabo meeting was preceded by a number of national and local initiatives to pave the way for political dialogue. On 5 June, the Ministry of Communication and National Reconciliation presented the urgent action plan for national reconciliation, as part of the general reconciliation strategy that was prepared with United Nations support. At the request of the Head of State of the Transition, from 10 to 12 June, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue facilitated a three-day seminar in Bangui on national dialogue and reconciliation. In addition, a local non-governmental organization facilitated a series of meetings between representatives of the ex-Séléka and the anti-balaka.

24. In her address to the nation on 4 July, the Head of State of the Transition publicly endorsed the need for inclusive political dialogue, announcing that it would commence with the holding of a forum in Brazzaville and that the transitional authorities would be involved in the organization. She emphasized the need for a threefold approach involving political dialogue, reconciliation at the grass-roots level and justice. Referring to lessons learned from the past, Ms. Samba-Panza emphasized the need to ensure that the political dialogue did not reward those who had taken up arms and that it did not forget about the victims. She also recognized the need for a more balanced and inclusive national army.

25. On 9 April, the Head of State of the Transition signed a decree establishing the Special Unit of Inquiry and Investigation to conduct preliminary inquiries and investigations into cases of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes committed since 1 January 2004, which was inaugurated on 8 July. The Conseil supérieur de la magistrature reassigned judges throughout all judicial instances and appointed magistrates for the Special Unit of Inquiry and Investigation.

26. Overall, preparations for presidential and legislative elections and a referendum on the constitution moved slowly, despite the signing on 24 June of a decree on the organization and functioning of the National Electoral Authority. Key policy decisions, including on the methodology for voter registration and the sequencing of the polls, remain outstanding, while the legal framework has yet to be completed.

27. On 10 June, the National Transitional Council reviewed and adopted the 2014 State budget amounting to CFAF 221 billion (approximately US$ 440 million), of which CFAF 1 billion was allocated for elections. The Committee of the National Transitional Council tasked with preparing the draft constitution participated in a capacity-building seminar and initiated a workplan which envisaged the holding of nationwide consultations on the draft constitution.

28. State authority remained largely absent outside Bangui. Ex-Séléka remained in control of 8 of the 16 prefectures where they exercise State functions. On 27 April, ex-Séléka elements prevented a Government delegation from installing a new prefect in Ndélé, while a similar case was reported in Dimbi where the ex-Séléka dismissed a mayor for allegedly supporting anti-balaka. In some areas, the anti-balaka provided security and levied taxes.

29. On 9 and 10 May, the ex-Séléka held a two-day congress in Ndélé, which was attended by approximately 1,200 participants. The ex-Séléka announced the composition of the new military structure designated as the Forces républicaines, including police and gendarmerie, led by General Joseph Zoundeiko. Condemning the attacks against the Muslim population, the ex-Séléka called on the international community to relocate communities under threat and to facilitate the partition of the country. Following the congress, the ex-Séléka established its military headquarters in Bambari and created a Committee for Political Coordination, tasked with the organization of a general assembly to elect a Political Bureau. The attempt by the ex-Séléka to unify its structures and the establishment of its headquarters in the central city of Bambari were perceived by some as a provocation aimed at partition of the country.

30. Political cohesiveness within the ex-Séléka remained weak. On 28 June, General Noureddine Adam issued a communiqué announcing the suspension of the coordination mechanism put in place following the Ndélé congress. This was followed by the holding of an assembly of ex-Séléka leaders in Birao from 6 to 10 July. A subsequent communiqué announced the transformation of the movement into the Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique and the composition of its Political Bureau led by the former Head of State of the Transition, Michel Djotodia, while expressing the intention to participate in the Brazzaville forum.

31. There were also attempts by the anti-balaka to unify their highly fluid movement and create an organizational and command structure under Patrice Ngaissona and Sébastien Wenezoui. On 21 June, two rival factions of the anti-balaka in Bangui

agreed on the appointment of a national coordinator and his deputy, followed by the announcement on 27 June of a 15-member team tasked with national coordination.

32. The International Contact Group on the Central African Republic met twice, in Brazzaville on 21 March and in Addis Ababa on 7 July. The International Contact Group stressed the need for inclusive political dialogue and encouraged the transitional authorities to accelerate preparations for the elections. It also endorsed the proposal for the holding of a forum on national reconciliation and political dialogue in Brazzaville and the establishment of an international mediation team which would include United Nations and African Union representatives, with ECCAS as Rapporteur. The Brazzaville meeting, which was chaired by the Mediator, President Denis Sassou Nguesso, was held from 21 to 23 July and was attended by the Head of State of the Transition and a number of transitional authority representatives, senior representatives of ECCAS member States, international partners including ECCAS, the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union, as well as Central African representatives of armed groups including the ex-Séléka and anti-balaka, civil society, political parties and religious groups. Following intensive consultations in advance of and during the Brazzaville meeting, a cessation of hostilities agreement was signed by the Central African representatives on 23 July. The agreement commits the signatories to an immediate cessation of hostilities and establishes a follow-up monitoring mechanism made up of representatives of political and armed groups, the transitional authorities and members of the international community.

C. Socioeconomic developments

33. The Central African Republic's already weak economy continued to be severely affected by the crisis, although efforts by MISCA and Sangaris to secure the main supply route led to some free movement of goods through the Douala-Bangui corridor. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported several cash-for-work initiatives aimed at providing immediate income-generating opportunities to youth at risk, displaced population groups and women. UNDP, in partnership with the Peacebuilding Fund, also supported the payment of salaries of police and gendarmes from May to August. In parallel, the World Bank supported the payment of salaries of the rest of the civil service for the same period, while salaries for the armed forces were covered directly by the transitional authorities. Interventions aimed at attaining a minimum budget, accounting and cash management are gradually being implemented with funding from the European Union, the World Bank and the African Development Bank. On 14 May, the International Monetary Fund approved financial assistance under the Rapid Credit Facility in the amount of nearly $13 million in support of emergency recovery programmes.

D. Subregional aspects

34. The subregion, under ECCAS leadership, remained actively engaged in responding and finding a solution to the crisis, including through efforts led by the President of Chad and Chair of ECCAS, Idriss Déby Itno, and the President of the Congo and Mediator, Denis Sassou Nguesso. A tripartite meeting on 6 June in Luanda brought together Presidents Déby and Sassou Nguesso and the President of

Angola, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, to discuss the situation in the Central African Republic. In a subsequent communique, the Heads of State urged the transitional authorities to work towards national reconciliation.

E. Safety and security of United Nations staff

35. United Nations personnel continued to operate under difficult conditions, facing various threats related to armed conflict, high rates of crime and civil unrest. Eight national staff members were victims of targeted attacks. The MINUSCA guard unit deployed in Bangui, Bouar and Bambari. It has proved to be a critical asset to ensure the security of United Nations installations and personnel and to extricate staff members under threat.

III. Update on planning in relation to the establishment of MINUSCA

36. By Security Council resolution 2149 (2014), the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic was subsumed into MINUSCA on 10 April. By the same resolution, the Council decided that the transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA will occur on 15 September. Until then, MINUSCA is mandated to implement priority tasks outlined in paragraphs 30 and 31 of the resolution, through its civilian component.

37. A mission concept developed in consultation with United Nations partners to guide the implementation of the MINUSCA mandate was approved on 30 May. The mission concept foresees that the objectives and priorities of MINUSCA will be adjusted over time to the particular conditions and needs of the country and its people. During the early phase of its deployment, MINUSCA will focus on providing a secure environment, particularly for civilians under threat of violence, a sine qua non for progress in other areas. It will also concentrate on supporting the transitional authorities to extend State authority and exercise basic State functions, peace and reconciliation efforts, protecting basic human rights and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance. As conditions evolve in the country and, in particular, as the security situation improves and members of armed groups are engaged in disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and community violence-reduction projects, and as national security capabilities develop, the objectives of the Mission will shift to focus increasingly on supporting the State's ability to deliver public services, the consolidation of a stable political environment, the reconciliation of communities and the return of people to their homes, the development of rule of law institutions, and the protection and promotion of human rights.

38. Specifically, the mission concept provides that MINUSCA will organize its activities around three key interconnected and mutually reinforcing objectives, namely, (a) security, the protection of civilians and human rights, (b) support to the political process, reconciliation and elections, and (c) the restoration and extension of State authority. The mission concept outlines five phases and includes detailed planning for the first two. The first phase involves the establishment of MINUSCA and the transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA, from 10 April to 15 September. During this phase, MINUSCA will establish a multidimensional

presence in Bangui at the Mission headquarters, and three integrated sector headquarters offices in Bria, Kaga Bandoro and Bouar. During the second phase, from 15 September 2014 to 30 April 2015, which will bring MINUSCA to the end of its current mandate period under Security Council resolution 2149 (2014), the Mission will further increase its field presence and aim to contribute to minimum security and create room for a political dialogue leading to a basic national consensus on the way forward with regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the reconstitution of the national security apparatus and elections, while reaching full operating capability. Military, police and support concepts of operations based on the mission concept were approved in July.

39. The MINUSCA exit strategy will be based on progress made in each phase towards the achievement of an end state in which the Central African Republic will have completed a transition to a democratically elected legitimate government which is broadly representative and capable of responding to the basic needs of the population. The State would have the mi imum capacity to maintain law and order across the country, ensure basic respect for human rights, including the ability to address impunity, and protect its people by preventing sexual and gender-based crimes, manage resources and provide basic social services. Security and governance conditions would have improved for the voluntary repatriation of refugees and durable solutions for internally displaced persons, in their communities of origin or elsewhere. Capacities to facilitate the peaceful management and resolution of conflict would be in place in communities that have suffered severe inter-communal violence.

IV. Implementation of the mandate of the Mission

Support to the political process

40. In keeping with the MINUSCA mandate and with the support of the members of the International Contact Group, my Special Representative consulted key stakeholders in the Central African Republic and the subregion with a view to revitalizing the political process. On the basis of those consultations, MINUSCA developed a proposal that envisages the launching of an inclusive, meaningful political dialogue process in three phases. The three phases involve a cessation of hostilities followed by community-based consultations and inclusive political dialogue to reach agreement on key policy issues, including the reconstitution and reform of the armed forces; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; governance, elections, decentralization, justice, reconciliation and the return of refugees and economic development. These proposals have been endorsed by both the transitional authorities and the International Contact Group and constituted the basis for the discussions at the Brazzaville forum on national reconciliation and political dialogue, as well as the subsequent steps of the political dialogue process.

41. MINUSCA and UNDP provided technical assistance to the National Electoral Authority in developing an electoral timeline, operational planning and finalizing its internal rules of procedure. UNDP is working on a project document to support the electoral process, including a "basket fund" to coordinate contributions from international donors. From 8 to 10 July, a seminar was co-organized by the United Nations and the International Organization of La Francophonie, aimed at

strengthening the capacity of key electoral stakeholders to manage the electoral process in compliance with the legal framework. MINUSCA advanced with its own electoral support planning. This will include transportation of electoral materials from Bangui to 17 prefectures and 71 sub-prefectures with a view to supporting the National Electoral Authority in preparing and organizing voter registration, other pre-electoral operations and the different polls.

42. MINUSCA has developed a communications strategy aimed at providing an impartial and credible voice, explaining the mandate and managing expectations. Planning is under way for the establishment of a United Nations Radio that will provide coverage across the country. Approximately 70 per cent of the country and more than half of the population are not currently covered by any media. It is envisaged that the radio will not only consist of a United Nations radio station but also include a platform of community radios and other key media partners. MINUSCA also enhanced its interaction with local and international media and provided training to local journalists.

43. MINUSCA, UNDP and the Peacebuilding Fund are working closely with the transitional authorities and civil society organizations to support the implementation of the urgent action plan for national reconciliation. UNDP, with support from the Peacebuilding Fund, is planning to support the establishment of a network of mediators and local peace and dialogue committees as well as the establishment of a national structure for mediation.

Protection of civilians

44. With many Muslim communities pressing to be relocated to the northern part of the country or neighbouring countries, the international community continues to face difficult trade-offs between prioritizing life-saving efforts and protecting civilians, responding to legitimate requests, considering the threats, and contributing to the de facto partition of the country. MINUSCA has further increased its interaction with the humanitarian country team as well as the international forces, including MISCA, Operation Sangaris and EUFOR, to enhance efforts to protect civilians in high-risk areas, in particular in the western and central parts of the country.

45. From 24 June to 1 July, an inter-agency team visited the Central African Republic to support MINUSCA in the development of a Mission-wide protection of civilians strategy. The draft strategy identifies non-State armed groups and intercommunal violence as posing the main threats to civilians in the Central African Republic. It proposes a Mission-wide protection response plan, taking into account the capacities and complementary actions of national and international protection actors, and specifying the roles and responsibilities of MINUSCA civilian, police and military components in support of strategic planning, coordination, information management, early warning and response, public information and advocacy, and training. On the basis of the team's recommendations, MINUSCA has initiated the implementation of a set of protection of civilians tools and mechanisms, along with a structure for coordinating action within MINUSCA, as well as with humanitarian partners and international forces. From 2 to 4 July, MINUSCA facilitated the first joint visit by members of the MISCA-MINUSCA protection of civilians working group to Bambari to assess the

protection situation there and provide recommendations on preventing, pre-empting and responding to violence against civilians in the area.

Child protection

46. The task force on monitoring and reporting on grave child rights violations confirmed several allegations of recruitment and use of child soldiers. Efforts of the task force resulted in the separation of 237 children from the sites where ex-Séléka elements are regrouped in Bangui. Forty-three children were separated from the ex-Séléka in Bambari and 76 children from anti-balaka in Bangui. The task force also made progress with the ex-Séléka military leadership on child protection issues. On 3 July, a command order prohibiting the recruitment and use of child soldiers was issued by General Joseph Zoundeiko, military chief of staff of the ex-Séléka.

47. MINUSCA provided training to 350 MISCA formed police unit personnel on child rights and child protection, as well as to other child protection actors, including representatives of the coalition of Central African women's associations, with a view to enhancing their monitoring and verification capacity. In addition, 79 anti-balaka representatives were sensitized about child rights and child protection in Bangui.

Conflict-related sexual violence

48. In collaboration with partners, MINUSCA began establishing a monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangement on conflict-related sexual violence, in order to better target activities to prevent sexual violence and ensure accountability. The Mission also supported the Association des femmes juristes centrafricaines in building capacities for the monitoring and investigation of alleged violations against women, the extension of psychosocial assistance to victims, and sensitization on violations against women in conflict and post-conflict situations. At least 70 training sessions for MISCA, civil society organizations, and national security forces addressing protection from conflict-related sexual violence were carried out over the reporting period by MINUSCA and its partners.

Promotion and protection of human rights

49. MINUSCA increased its capacity to monitor, report and investigate violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, with support from the Peacebuilding Fund. A number of visits were conducted to high-risk areas, including Boda, Bambari, Bouar, Bossangoa and Yaloke. MINUSCA began deploying human rights officers outside Bangui, including in Bambari and Bouar, while increasing activities to promote human rights and to build the capacity of national and local non-governmental organizations. MINUSCA also initiated training on international human rights and humanitarian law for MISCA military personnel.

Efforts in support of the extension of State authority and preservation of territorial integrity

50. While the central authorities made some efforts to deploy State authority in some areas, including attempts to deploy préfets or police and gendarmerie, these remain largely ineffective. In Bambari, for example, 10 police and 50 gendarmerie officers were deployed from Bangui, although without equipment, and they have yet to be accepted by the population and by the ex-Séléka on the ground. The justice

system and wider rule of law remain largely absent in the interior of the country. Security and infrastructure will have to be significantly improved before the State is able to provide even the most basic services. On 10 June, UNDP and the World Bank held a meeting in Paris that included transitional authorities and other partners, to assess the needs and challenges related to the redeployment of State administration. In support of the Ministry of Territorial Administration, UNDP has convened a working group on the redeployment of State administration to address key State-building tasks related to security, administrative presence, the justice and criminal chain, economic recovery and the delivery of basic social services.

Support for national and international justice and the rule of law, and implementation of the urgent temporary measures

51. UNDP, MINUSCA and UN-Women finalized a joint project in support of the re-establishment of justice and security in the Central African Republic under the global focal point arrangement for the police, justice and corrections. The project envisages support to the judiciary to fight impunity, the resumption of sessions by the criminal chamber of the Court of Appeal in Bangui, mobile court sessions, legal aid initiatives, assistance to victims, notably survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and capacity-building for national magistrates and prison personnel. The project also envisages support to institutions in charge of internal security such as the Ministry of Security, police, gendarmerie and prefectural administration, and support to communities for managing conflicts at the local level.

52. A United Nations multidisciplinary team visited the Central African Republic to develop recommendations with regard to the adoption of urgent temporary measures to maintain basic law and order and fight impunity pursuant to paragraph 40 of resolution 2149 (2014). The team confirmed an almost total lack of capacity of national counterparts in the areas of police, justice and corrections. It also found that there are no guarantees that national magistrates can render justice in an impartial manner and without fear of political interference or physical violence. The team recommended that, where national actors and institutions are unable to adequately assume their roles and perform their functions, international personnel should have the authority, exceptionally, to take over those roles and functions and perform them directly, within the context of applicable national legal frameworks and without prejudice to the overall responsibility of the transitional authorities. The Mission underlined that dedicated resources would be needed to perform the range of tasks foreseen under the urgent temporary measures mandate.

53. Following consultations with national and international partners, MINUSCA developed a two-stage approach for the implementation of urgent temporary measures. In the first stage, a team of international investigation and prosecution experts would be deployed as soon as possible to advise and support national magistrates in conducting investigations on serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including conflict-related sexual violence as well as grave violations committed against children, that constitute a threat to peace, stability and security in the Central African Republic.

54. In the second stage, internationally recruited prosecutors and judges would be authorized, together with national magistrates, to investigate and try serious violations of human rights and international law, including conflict-related sexual violence as well as grave violations committed against children, that constitute a

threat to peace, stability and security in the Central African Republic. This would require the national authorities to amend the legislative framework.

55. On 4 July, my Special Representative presented these proposals to the transitional authorities; this was followed by further consultations with the Minister of Justice and national senior magistrates. The Minister of Justice proposed the creation of a special jurisdiction created by national legislation, in which international judicial and prosecutorial executive functions would be attached to a national special body. Efforts are under way to identify and deploy experienced personnel that would be part of this jurisdiction, which would need to be established by national legislation.

56. With regard to the police, it is envisaged that specialized teams of United Nations police would undertake a number of tasks under the urgent temporary measures mandate. These would include proactive criminal threat assessments with regard to individuals or groups inciting, planning, committing or having committed criminal acts related to the conflict. They would also entail reactive measures that would include responding to spontaneous incidents that threaten public order or endanger the general public or vulnerable persons/communities, to ensure that public order is maintained, serious incidents are responded to and crimes of sufficient public interest are investigated in a timely and transparent manner. It is further proposed that international corrections personnel be deployed as an exceptional measure to perform some prison tasks, including operating as an emergency response team during prison disturbances.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

57. MINUSCA deployed dedicated capacities to assist the authorities in developing a national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, as well as community violence-reduction programmes. The national strategic and technical disarmament, demobilization and reintegration committees resumed work on 5 June and are preparing the development of a national programme, with technical and secretariat support from MINUSCA. Pending the conclusion of a political agreement with the armed groups, which will form the basis of the new programme, MINUSCA, together with the transitional authorities, MISCA and Operation Sangaris, has developed interim stabilization measures to address immediate security threats. A project to relocate the 2,114 ex-Séléka regrouped in three sites in Bangui was launched on 5 June, following the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the ex-Séléka leadership and the transitional authorities on 22 April. The project, which is being implemented by the International Organization for Migration with funding from the Peacebuilding Fund, envisages the relocation of the regrouped ex-Séléka from Bangui and their reinsertion in their communities of origin. MINUSCA also worked closely with the authorities, MISCA and Sangaris to prepare a disarmament process, and community violence reduction projects, such as labour-intensive programmes, that could be implemented at short notice, should a ceasefire agreement among the armed groups be reached.

Weapons and ammunitions management

58. The Mine Action Service has identified approximately 130 tons of unsecure and unsafe arms and ammunition, most being held in military camps and often at

risk of theft and accidental explosion. These items have been segregated for destruction or temporary relocation to a safe storage facility in order to protect the civilian population from the threat of explosive hazards. The Mine Action Service refurbished two facilities at the gendarmerie headquarters, which will safely and securely house small-calibre weapons, as well as a limited amount of ammunition and explosives. On 3 July, the Service oversaw the destruction of half of the known volume of unsafe ammunition found in Bangui.

Update on planning in relation to security sector reform and vetting

59. The reconstitution and reform of the national defence and security forces is expected to be a key element of any political dialogue. The Government has yet to reactivate the strategic and technical committees on security sector reform, established in October 2013. The committees are expected to develop an action plan for the restructuring of the army.

60. In the framework of a registration exercise conducted with UNDP-donated equipment, 6,752 elements of the armed forces (out of 8,416) were officially registered, 632 were declared deserters and 302 deceased or disappeared. The majority of armed forces personnel were regrouped in Camp Kassai in Bangui and an unknown number are believed to be in Obo, Birao and Bouar. To date, 1,493 police and 2,425 gendarmerie personnel have been physically identified as part of a Government registration exercise. Efforts to restore the operational capacities of the national gendarmerie and police included the delivery of 11 pick-up vehicles on 31 May and the rehabilitation of three police stations in Bangui as part of a UNDP project funded by the Peacebuilding Fund which commenced in April. UNDP launched activities aimed at establishing monitoring and oversight mechanisms of the police and gendarmerie, jointly with United Nations police and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

V. Preparation for the transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA

61. Immediately following the adoption of resolution 2149 (2014), an interdepartmental team led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and including MINUSCA visited Addis Ababa and Brussels from 14 to 16 April to discuss the modalities for the transition from MISCA to MINUSCA and develop an action plan. In Bangui, MISCA and MINUSCA established a joint task force that meets regularly to ensure the implementation of key tasks in relation to the transition, including the establishment of a command and control structure and force and police headquarters; the training of MISCA contingents; support arrangements; the redeployment of military and police units and critical infrastructure requirements.

62. From 1 to 19 May, the United Nations and the African Union conducted a joint visit to the Central African Republic to assess the capacities of the MISCA contingents and identify capability gaps. The assessment confirmed that MISCA contingents were operationally reactive and delivering effectively, despite significant shortfalls in equipment and limited logistical support systems. The

assessment identified critical shortfalls in mobility (due to lack of vehicles and air assets), medical capacity and command and control (due to lack of structure and communication equipment within units). All contingents were found to require self-sustainment capabilities and equipment, particularly with regard to water treatment, ablution, crowd control and observation.

63. In follow-up to the joint capability assessment, the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support have worked closely with the MISCA troop- and police-contributing countries that were identified for rehatting to MINUSCA, to explore all available options to overcome the identified shortfalls. On 2 July, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations held a meeting of MISCA troop- and police-contributing countries and donors in New York, to seek donor support for the deployment of the additional capabilities that are required. Early in July, an advance police team was deployed to Bangui to support the establishment of the MINUSCA police component and support the transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA in the area of policing.

64. MINUSCA continued to work closely with MISCA to enhance its overall command and control, including through the provision of training to staff officers. In addition to the planned rehatting of a number of MISCA staff officers, qualified civilian MISCA staff members were actively considered for recruitment into MINUSCA in accordance with United Nations procedures. Efforts began to combine the joint operations centres of MISCA and MINUSCA and co-locate the MISCA and MINUSCA military and police headquarters; this is to be completed prior to the transfer of authority on 15 September. A United Nations mobile training team is carrying out in-mission training of trainers for the MISCA military and police personnel that will be rehatted. The curriculum encompasses material on United Nations standards as well as key mandated tasks, including the protection of civilians, child protection and conflict-related sexual violence, with the use of scenario-based exercises.

65. In parallel, the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support were active in the generation of additional capabilities for MINUSCA. Force generation processes were accelerated, and similar efforts are under way to speed up contracting and movement timelines. As a result of these efforts, three non-MISCA infantry battalions as well as two formed police units and 120 individual police officers will be in the process of deploying at the transfer of authority on 15 September. Regarding enablers, an engineer company, which began to deploy in June, will be fully operational before the transfer of authority, while a second engineer company will follow shortly thereafter. The requirement for two military utility helicopter units will be met, the first three helicopters becoming operational around the time of the transfer of authority. A civilian medical capacity has been contracted for a Bangui Level I (plus) hospital and at least one military Level II hospital will be deployed by early October. The Force Commander, the Police Commissioner and some 60 staff officers for the force and sector headquarters will also be deployed by the transfer of authority. Capabilities for which pledges have yet to be received are for a security unit (sous groupement de sécurité) for the protection of key political stakeholders in Bangui, a special forces company, an attack helicopter unit and one C-130 fixed-wing aircraft.

VI. Financial aspects

66. The General Assembly, by its resolution 68/299 of 30 June 2014, authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for the Mission for the period from 10 April to 31 December 2014 in a total amount not exceeding $312,976,400, inclusive of the amount of $59,552,000 previously authorized by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for the period from 10 April to 30 June 2014.

67. As at 30 June 2014, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for MINUSCA amounted to $59,552,000. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at the same date amounted to $1,133.7 million.

68. As at 28 July 2014, amounts owed to the Member States that contribute the troops who make up MINUSCA totalled $0.7 million. The reimbursement of troop costs in the amount of $0.8 million has been made for the period up to 31 May 2014, respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

VII. Observations

69. Although there has been some improvement in Bangui, I remain deeply concerned about the security situation and the deadly cycle of sectarian violence in the Central African Republic with its tragic humanitarian consequences. Civilians across the country suffer appalling violence and brutality, widespread insecurity and a complete absence of basic services, with women and children paying the highest price. I strongly condemn all acts of violence and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law perpetrated by armed groups and civilians. As an essential first step, all parties must commit themselves to laying down their arms and ceasing all forms of violence and destabilizing activities immediately, in accordance with the cessation of hostilities agreement signed at Brazzaville on 23 July.

70. Too many minority populations, mainly Muslim, have left the country. Only a few thousand have stayed behind in the southern and western parts of the country, and most of them are trapped in enclaves at risk in Bangui and other locations. I call on the transitional authorities and national actors, with the support of the international community, to fully implement the cessation of hostilities agreement, and to take immediate measures to ensure the protection of those populations and improve their living conditions. Steps also need to be taken to address the root causes of the conflict and allow displaced populations to safely and voluntarily return, without fear of being attacked.

71. I commend the efforts of the international forces, MISCA, the French forces of Operation Sangaris and EUFOR, which remain critical to saving lives and preventing a further deterioration of the security situation. I pay tribute to the dedication and courage with which they implement their mandates in a dangerous and unpredictable environment, and extend my sympathy to the families of those who lost their lives in the service of peace. I am particularly encouraged by the excellent cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations in preparing for the transfer of authority from MISCA to MINUSCA in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect. However, the MISCA contingents continue to lack critical capabilities. MISCA troops and police will be the backbone of MINUSCA

on 15 September and it is vital that international partners help to enable those contingents to deliver in accordance with United Nations standards.

72. I am encouraged by the consensus emerging among national and international key stakeholders, further to the ECCAS Summit in Malabo on 27 June and the meeting of the International Contact Group for the Central African Republic in Addis Ababa on 7 July, that lasting solutions to the crisis in the Central African Republic can be achieved only through inclusive political dialogue within a wider framework of national reconciliation. Preceding initiatives by the Head of State of the Transition, Catherine Samba-Panza, and other national and international actors in preparation for a dialogue and reconciliation process were important catalysts and demonstrated the readiness among Central Africans to engage in dialogue. The participation of Central Africans from across the political spectrum in the Brazzaville forum has marked the beginning of a political process that must be inclusive and owned by the Central Africans themselves. The forum was an important first step in a process that will be a long journey, addressing the suffering of the victims, understanding the motivation of the offenders, bringing together estranged communities, and trying to find a path to justice, truth, reconciliation and ultimately peace.

73. Such dialogue should lead to a political agreement on elections; the composition and format of the national armed forces; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups; transitional justice and other key political issues, including the future of governance, decentralization, and the economic future of the country. I encourage the transitional authorities, armed entities and groups and all political and civil society actors to take full ownership of the process and redouble their efforts to work together in earnest to resolve their differences, in close cooperation with my Special Representative and the international mediation. With ownership comes responsibility. I urge all parties, and those who have an influence on them, to refrain from acts that undermine this process.

74. As I underlined in my last report, there will be no solution to the crisis in the Central African Republic without the continued active engagement of the country's neighbours and the region. I pay a tribute to the resolve and determination of the ECCAS leaders, particularly the current Chairman, the President of Chad, Idriss Déby Itno, and the Mediator, the President of the Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, as well as the continued support of the African Union.

75. Tackling impunity will be vital to bringing about an immediate improvement in people's lives and creating an environment in which sustainable peace can take hold. I am encouraged by the discussions between the transitional authorities and MINUSCA on the implementation of urgent temporary measures, which I am confident can have an important multiplier effect. Measures to hold accountable perpetrators of human rights violations and of international humanitarian law and to restore State authority are essential pillars of the Mission's protection of civilians mandate. They are vital to restoring confidence in State institutions and respect for the rule of law. Alongside the efforts of MINUSCA in this area, a significant investment in restoring the penal chain in the Central African Republic will be needed.

76. Since its establishment on 10 April, MINUSCA has significantly increased its civilian component, while working closely with MISCA and the African Union to ensure a seamless transition on 15 September. However, the progress made in a

number of areas in standing up MINUSCA cannot detract from the challenges that exist a few weeks before the transfer of authority. The expectations of MINUSCA remain high and there is significant work ahead to bring the Mission up to its authorized strength of 10,000 military personnel and 1,800 police. Although lessons have been learned from other United Nations peacekeeping deployments, mounting and sustaining a large, highly decentralized multidimensional mission in a landlocked country with extremely poor infrastructure remains daunting. I am nonetheless confident that on 15 September MINUSCA will reach an initial operating capability that will ensure its ability to implement priority mandated tasks.

77. The deployment of the peacekeeping operation alone will not be sufficient to resolve the crisis in the Central African Republic. The international community must remain engaged in a sustained and coordinated manner to provide the Central African Republic with the assistance necessary to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of its actions, based on the respective comparative advantages of the actors involved. Given the dire conditions and extreme vulnerability of the population, immediate and sustained support for humanitarian operations is vitally important.

78. I am grateful to my Special Representative for the Central African Republic and Head of MINUSCA, Babacar Gaye, for his tireless efforts. I am deeply appreciative of the work being done by the personnel of MINUSCA and the United Nations country team in a dangerous and unpredictable environment. I am grateful to my Special Representative for Central Africa, Abdoulaye Bathily, for his support to the international mediation effort. I also thank the African Union, MISCA troop-contributing countries, ECCAS, the European Union, donor countries and multilateral and non-governmental organizations for their continued efforts in support of peace in the Central African Republic.